

Beaumont Hospitals®

September 15, 2010

The Honorable Tom George
Senate Health Policy Committee
P.O. Box 30036
Lansing, MI 48909

Dear Senator George:

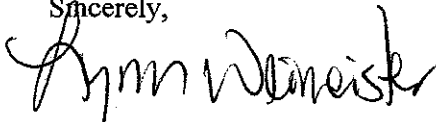
On behalf of Beaumont Hospitals, I am writing in support of Substitute House Bill 4583 that is on the agenda for the September 15th Senate Health Policy Committee meeting. This legislation would modify Michigan's statute dealing with HIV testing to incorporate many of the recommendations of the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), which will facilitate testing in the general population to identify individuals who may be HIV positive.

When AIDS was first recognized and HIV testing was first developed, AIDS was confined primarily to the gay population and intravenous drug users. Michigan adopted laws that required physicians to do extensive pre- and post-test counseling for patients before an HIV test was ordered, and the patient had to sign a separate written informed consent form for an HIV test. Because HIV is now more prevalent the general population, pre-test counseling and separate written informed consent serves as more of a deterrent to HIV testing and identifying individuals who may be HIV positive.

House Bill 4583 will still require that a physician provide information on HIV and inform a patient if an HIV test will be performed as part of a battery of diagnostic tests, and still allows the patient to opt out of the HIV test if they choose. Physicians believe this is a better means of identifying and controlling the spread of HIV and AIDS in the general population while still retaining rights for patients.

On behalf of Beaumont Hospitals, we urge you to support this legislation.

Sincerely,



Lynn Weimeister, Director
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